

ROBERTSON, E. W.

INTERVIEW 9349

ROBERTSON, C. V.

INTERVIEW.

BIOGRAPHY FORM
WORKS PROGRESS ADMINISTRATION
Indian-Pioneer History Project for Oklahoma

Field Worker's name John F. Daugherty,

This report made on (date) November 30, 1937

1. Name C. V. Robertson,

2. Post office Address Sulphur, Oklahoma.

3. Residence address (or location) Route 2

4. DATE OF BIRTH: Month January Day 28 Year 1870.

5. Place of birth Arkansas.

6. Name of Father W. H. Robertson Place of birth Alabama.

Other information about father Shoe and boot maker.

7. Name of Mother Bess Ann Cochran Place of birth Illinois.

Other information about mother _____

Notes or complete narrative by the field worker dealing with the life and story of the person interviewed. Refer to Manual for suggested subjects and questions. Continue on blank sheets if necessary and attach firmly to this form. Number of sheets attached Six.

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John F. Daugherty,
Investigator.
November 30, 1937.

Interview with Mr. C. V. Robertson,
Route 2, Sulphur, Oklahoma.

My parents were W. H. Robertson, born in Alabama, and Bess Ann Cochran, born in Illinois. Father was a shoe and boot maker. There were six children in our family.

I was born in Arkansas, January 28, 1870.

I walked from Arkansas to San Bois Town in the Choctaw Nation in 1888. I was looking for a job and I stopped east of San Bois Town near Iron Bridge at the home of a full blood Choctaw Indian by the name of Kizzey Barnett. I stayed all night there and the next morning Mr. Barnett hired me to haul feed and look after his cattle. I received \$15.00 a month and my board.

We got our groceries at Fort Smith and went to Casher, no longer in existence, for our mail, a distance of thirteen miles. The mail came from Fort Smith to Skulleyville in a hack and was brought across to Casher on a horse.

There were very few white people there at that time. The Indians were friendly after they became acquainted but

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they were slow about making friends. But when they liked a person they would accommodate him in any way they could.

I put the first ferry across San Bois Creek west of Iron Bridge near Kanima. It had rained for days and the creek was high. People were camped on both sides waiting for the water to subside so they could cross. Mr. Barnett had quite a pile of lumber and I asked him if I might make a ferry to carry those people across the creek. The boat was just long enough to put a team across.

We put the team across, then rolled the wagon on by man power and took it across. I charged from 25¢ to 50¢ for each team and wagon. I charged those who looked prosperous \$1.00 to cross, but those who looked as if they did not have much of this world's goods got across for 25¢.

We later built a larger boat which would carry a team and wagon at the same time.

One day Cherokee Bill tried to swim the creek. He couldn't get across so he had to come to me to be ferried across. I charged him 50¢ and he didn't have any money.

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He left his Winchester with me and said he would return in a few days to redeem it but he didn't come back, so the Winchester became my property.

One day I put a wagon load of prisoners across for Bass Reeves, a United States Marshal.

There was a toll gate east of Skulleyville on the Fort Smith road, which was called Gary Lane. It was named after a white man who lived in this vicinity. There was a dreadful mud hole on this road which became impassable. Some of the Indians living near cut poles and covered the mud hole with them so that wagons could drive across. They then put a bar across the road and built a log cabin for a toll collector to live in and they charged a toll of 25¢ for wagons to cross.

I worked for John Gunter for several years. He made his money by taking Indian ponies into Arkansas and trading them for cattle which he brought back to the Territory to fatten for the market.

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I worked for Campbell Russell on his ranch in the Cherokee Nation near the present site of Warner. Campbell was a fine brave man. One day he received a tip that a horse thief was coming his way. The cowboys were all on the range so Campbell went out and hid in the grass near a trail which the thief would travel. Campbell wore a large pair of mittens and carried a very small six-shooter in the palm of his hand inside the right mitten. He stayed in hiding all night waiting for the thief.

Just at daybreak the thief rode by, Campbell came from his place of seclusion and told the man to "hunt the air". When the man got his hands in the air he was told to dismount and Campbell took his firearms. The thief had three horses with him. He asked Campbell which court he was working for and was told that he was working for Campbell Russell.

Campbell said, "As long as men like you are at liberty to steal our horses and cattle we can't have anything. I'm

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going to turn you over to the Federal jail at Muskogee."

The thief said, "You have made a man of me. This is my last trip."

Campbell took the thief and horses to Muskogee. The horses were returned to their owners before they knew of their loss. The thief was put in jail, later tried and sent to the penitentiary. While he was in prison he wrote a letter to Campbell, thanking him for what he had done and promising to live the life of a good citizen after his prison term was ended.

While I was working for Barnett, Belle Starr and her crowd came out from Younger's Bend, near Briar Town on the Canadian River, to rob a full blood Choctaw Indian who lived west of San Bois Town. He owned many cattle and was quite wealthy. His name was Carney. He told the band that he had no money. They hanged him but he still insisted he had no money. They hanged him the third time and still he said he had no money.

They finally put the rope around his wife's neck and hanged her. They pulled her up and let her down twice.

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The old Indian still maintained that he had no money. The third time they pulled his wife up she looked as if she were dying. The old Indian calmly said, "Let he down, I give it my money."

They let the old woman down and she was unconscious. They worked with her until she regained consciousness and the old Indian went and dug up \$800.00 in gold which he had buried for safe keeping.

I was married to Elvira Kenneeley near Skulleyville in 1895.

IN EX 6115

Permits--Cherokee

Leaching--Cherokee strip

Med. cert

Cattle--San pin

Permits--Breed